Key Events in the 1953 Coup in Iran

World War II ends. Iran becomes a target of both pro-Western and pro-Soviet forces with regard to the country's vast oil reserves.

Feb. 5, 1949: Ruler of Iran Is Wounded Slightly by Two Bullets Fired by Assassin

June 1950: General Ali Razmara becomes prime minister of Iran. Support grows for the nationalization of Iran's oil industry.

March 1951: Prime Minister Ali Razmara is assassinated. Nationalist Mohammed Mossadegh becomes prime minister and angers the British by wresting control of the oil industry.

July 17, 1952: Due to growing friction between the Shah and Mossadegh over oil, Mossadegh resigns. Ahmed Ghavam takes over as prime minister. Three days of rioting ensue.

July 22, 1952: Under pressure, the Shah is forced to reappoint Mossadegh.

March 1953: The C.I.A. begins drafting a plan to bring to power, through covert action, a government in Iran that would be preferred by the United States.

April 16, 1953: A C.I.A. study entitled "Factors Involved in the Overthrow of Mossadegh" is completed. The study concludes that a coup in Iran is possible.

May 13, 1953: C.I.A. and British intelligence officers meet in Nicosia, Cyprus, to draft plans for the coup. Meanwhile, the C.I.A.'s Tehran station is granted approval to launch a "grey propaganda" campaign to discredit the Mossadegh government.

June 10, 1953: C.I.A. officers meet in Beirut for a final review of the coup plan.

June 19, 1953: The final operation plan for the coup, agreed upon by both the C.I.A. and British intelligence, is submitted to the U.S. State Department and the Foreign Office in London.

July 1, 1953: Britain's prime minister gives final approval to the operational plan for the coup.

July 11, 1953: President Eisenhower gives final approval to the operational plan for the coup.

July 23, 1953: A British Foreign Office memorandum is presented to an Under Secretary of State, reassuring the U.S. that the British would be flexible on the issue of controlling oil in Iran.

July 25, 1953: Under pressure from the C.I.A., Princess Ashraf, the Shah's sister, flies to Tehran from France in order to convince the Shah to sign the royal decrees that would dismiss Mossadegh.

July 29, 1953: The C.I.A. intensifies a propaganda effort, which included planting stories in major American newspapers, to weaken the Mossadegh government.

Aug. 1, 1953: In a meeting with Gen. H. Norman Schwartzkopf, the Shah refuses to sign the C.I.A.-written royal decrees firing Mossadegh and naming Gen. Zahedi as the new prime minister of Iran.

Aug. 4, 1953: Mossadegh, suspecting that British and American governments were plotting against him, holds a referendum calling for the Iranian parliament to be dissolved.

Aug. 13, 1953: The shah signs a royal decrees dismissing Mossadegh. Word of the shah's support for the coup spreads quickly in Iran.

Aug. 15, 1953: The coup begins, but falters and then fails because Mossadegh received advanced warning of the plans. Zahedi goes into hiding.

Aug. 16, 1953: The Shah flees to Baghdad.

Aug. 17, 1953: Gen. Zahedi announces that he is the prime minister. To support this claim, C.I.A. agents disseminate a large quantity of photographs of the royal decrees dismissing Mossadegh and appointing Zahedi. The Shah announces that he indeed signed the decrees.

Aug. 18, 1953: The C.I.A., discouraged by the failed coup, sends a message to Tehran ordering the operations against Mossadegh to be halted.

Aug. 19, 1953: Several Tehran newspapers publish the Shah's decrees. As a result, supporters of the Shah begin gathering in the streets, and another coup begins. Gen. Zahedi comes out of hiding to lead the movement. By the end of the day, the country is in the hands of Zahedi and members of the Mossadegh government are either in hiding or incarerated.

1954: With Zahedi acting as prime minister and the pro-Shah army units in control, hundreds of National Front leaders, communist Tudah Party officers and political activists are arrested. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company resumes operation.

1954: Mossadegh's minister of foreign affairs, Hossein Fatemi, is sentenced to death and executed. 1954: The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company resumes operation.

source: nytimes.Com: Key Events in the 1953 Coup

Source